Unit Votes Authority to Release Data

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The Senate Government Operations Committee voted yesterday to give the proposed Senate committee on intelligence activities authority to disclose secret information over presidential objections if it has support of a majority of the Senate.

Approval of the provision, which is strongly opposed by the White House, came as the committee finished work on a resolution to set up the new 11-member intelligence committee.

White House aides have stressed that unless the President had the final decision on disclosure there would be a limitation on intelligence information sent to Congress.

Since a quorum of the Government Operations Committee was not present yesterday, a final vote on the resolution is to be taken Tuesday.

Although the White House lost on disclosure yesterday, it won on the controversy over prior notification of covert CIA operations.

Sen. Frank Church (D-Idaho), chairman of the Senate intelligence committee, and others have been demanding prior notification—so that legislators can raise objections and try to convince the President that an activity is unwise.

Yesterday, however, an amendment by Sen. Charles H. Percy (R-Ill.) was accepted that dropped a specific requirement for prior notification of "significant covert or clandestine operations" and substituted language requiring that the new committee be "currently informed" of "any significant anticipated activity."

The committee left one point for decision Tuesday—what to do about a senator who discloses classified information which the intelligence committee or the Senate has decided should remain secret.